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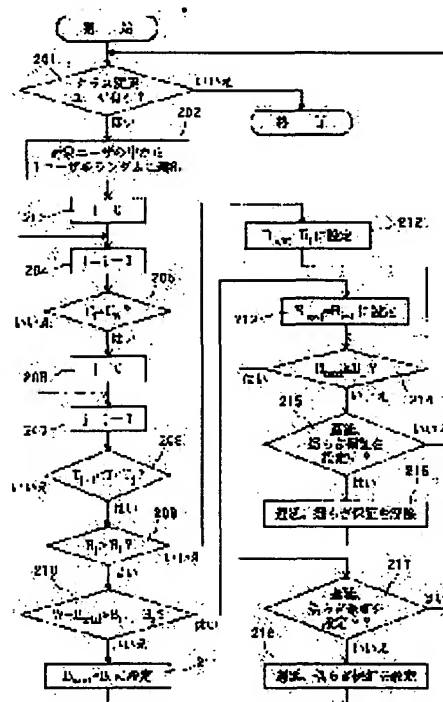
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PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To regulate how (plural types of) quality classes are defined and how the classes are allocated to a user or on which information item a class change stands, in a connection service to internet.

SOLUTION: When plural quality classes are predefined and internet service corresponding to the quality class for every user is supplied to the user through an electric communication network, the use time of the user with in prescribed time is measured. The quality class for the user is reset in accordance with the measured use time of the user. To put it concretely, the quality class is reset so that an allocation band is increased when use time T is long and the allocation band is reduced when use time T is short in accordance with the use time T of the user at close N time.



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CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] The utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method of two or more quality classes being defined beforehand, and being the control method of the quality classes for every user in the case of offering the Internet service according to the quality classes for every user to a user through a telecommunication network, measuring the utilization time of the user within predetermined time, and reconfiguring the quality classes to the user concerned according to a user's measured utilization time.

[Claim 2] It is the utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method according to claim 1 of reconfiguring the quality classes whose transmission quality is a high order more to the user concerned when the standard utilization time within the aforementioned predetermined time is specified for every quality classes and the aforementioned user's aforementioned utilization time exceeds the standard utilization time corresponding to the quality classes to the aforementioned user at that time.

[Claim 3] It is the utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method according to claim 1 of reconfiguring the quality classes whose transmission quality is a low rank more to the user concerned when the standard utilization time within the aforementioned predetermined time is specified for every quality classes and the aforementioned user's aforementioned utilization time is less than the standard utilization time corresponding to the quality classes to the aforementioned user at that time.

[Claim 4] The utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method according to claim 1 of defining the contract value of a throughput to each aforementioned user, and reconfiguring the quality classes whose transmission quality is a low rank more independently of the aforementioned quality classes to the user who communicates by the throughput beyond the aforementioned contract value.

[Claim 5] It can set, when offering the Internet service to a user through a telecommunication network. While being the determination method of a delay distribution value for each router and receiving the delay desired value of - end from each user in the case of a connection receptionist And the delay distribution value determination method of defining the root of - end, collecting the information about the confusion condition of each router on the aforementioned root, and determining the delay distribution value for every router according to the aforementioned confusion condition.

[Claim 6] The delay distribution value determination method according to claim 5 which collects the information about the aforementioned confusion condition periodically, and updates the delay distribution value for every aforementioned router.

[Claim 7] The guarantee-of-quality system which is characterized by providing the following and which two or more quality classes are defined beforehand, and offers the Internet service according to the quality classes for every user to a user through a telecommunication network. The router which connects a user and the Internet and can perform control of the transmission quality for every user. The quality test section which collects ***** between each user's utilization times from the aforementioned router. The user history database which stores the information which the aforementioned quality test section collected. The quality determination section which refers to the aforementioned user history database and determines the quality classes of the user concerned based on between the utilization times of the user within predetermined time, and the quality control section which directs control of the transmission quality about the user concerned to the aforementioned router according to the determined quality classes.

[Claim 8] It is the guarantee-of-quality system which two or more quality classes are defined beforehand, and offers the Internet service according to the quality classes for every user to a user through a telecommunication network. The router which connects a user and the Internet and can perform control of the transmission quality for every user, The quality test section which collects ***** from the aforementioned router to each user's throughput, The user understanding information database which stores the information which the aforementioned quality test section collected, As opposed to the user who communicates by the throughput which compared with the throughput of the user concerned the contract value of the throughput defined for every user independently of the aforementioned quality classes with reference to the aforementioned user understanding information database, and exceeded the contract value The guarantee-of-quality system which has the quality determination section which reconfigures the quality classes whose transmission quality is a low rank more, and the quality control section which directs control of the transmission quality about the user concerned to the aforementioned router according to the quality classes which reconfigured.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[The technical field to which invention belongs] this invention relates to the utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method and guarantee-of-quality system which control the service grade (quality classes) to the user who receives the Internet service through a telecommunication network, and the delay distribution value determination method of distributing a time delay value to each router in a network in order to guarantee the communication according to service grade.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] When a general user connects with the Internet, it usually accesses via ISP (Internet service provider : Internet service provider). Drawing 8 is drawing explaining connection with the Internet through ISP.

[0003] ISP72 arranges as the gateway to the Internet 71. ISP72 is equipped with the subscriber router 74 for holding a user 73, and the subscriber router 74 and each user 73 are connected with the access line 75, respectively. As an aa KUSESU circuit 75, an analog telephone line, an ISDN (service integrated digital network) circuit, or a digital dedicated line is used. The relay router 76 is formed in the appearance circuit, i.e., the Internet, side of the subscriber router 74. This ISP72 will be connected to the Internet 71 when the appearance circuit side of the relay router 76 connects with appropriate IX (Internet connectivity point) (un-illustrating). The carrier which owns an access line 75 and the trunk line between the subscriber router 74 and the relay router 76 may work as ISP72.

[0004] Now, many ISP is continuing business and each ISP has defined the tariff structure for an Internet connectivity based on the business policy, respectively. Although there is much what a monthly use charge fluctuates as the tariff structure according to the utilization time, ISP of full fixed rate system also exists. The typical tariff structure is illustrated below.

[0005] (Example 1) Minimum charge + connection fees : in this tariff structure, if the utilization time of minimum charge is alpha-beta time to the moon in the moon, *** accounting of department of foundations golden + connection fees and more than moon beta time will make alpha time a fixed amount, for example.

[0006] (Example 2) Some kinds of use plans : set up two or more plans and apply the plan which the user chose beforehand to the user. There is the following as an example of the plan prepared.

- Plan A : if it is exceeded K1 yen till moon T 1 hour, when it of J 1 yen will be exceeded K2 yen till - plan B:moon T 2 hours by /, it is a part for J 2 yen/. -- It tends to use with a - plan Z:Kz circle.

[0007] (Example 3) Fixed amount charge : suppose without any restriction that it is usable with the monthly amount of K yen.

[0008] Now, since IP (Internet Protocol) which is the communications protocol used by the Internet is the protocol of a connectionless type best effort type, if the network is crowded, it does not say that a throughput falls, and, originally guarantees neither a time delay nor delay fluctuation. When the load of packet processing with the router in a network becomes large, it is easy to generate increase of delay, and delay fluctuation. However, since it is necessary to suppress a time delay and delay fluctuation within a predetermined value depending on a use, setting priority (quality classes) as processing within a router, and guaranteeing a time delay within the net and delay fluctuation about a specific packet, i.e., a packet scheduling method, is proposed variously. To the packet scheduling method proposed until now For example, PQ (priority Queueing), CBQ (class Based Queueing), TSS (Time-Shift Scheduling), WFQ (weighted Fair Queueing), DRR (Deficit Round Robin), Delay EDD (Delay-Earliest-due-date), There are Jitter EDD (Jitter-Earliest-due-date) and stop-and-go (Stop-and-Go), and it has the advantage and demerit, respectively.

[0009] Furthermore, there is also a band control unit which applies to actual equipment and is marketing-ized using a certain thing of the above-mentioned methods. However, a control system is complicated, and even if it is difficult to actually instrumentate and it is instrumentated, it is almost the case which is restricted to below the value with the number of classes defined etc., and has a certain restrictions at the time of use.

[0010]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] With the Internet service at present, as mentioned above, the guarantee of quality is not offered, and the comfortable service provision which can not necessarily be satisfied according to the confusion situation of a network as it is as that the number of times to which network cutting takes place increases *** [and] is not made. [that delay increases] Quality (connectability, delay) degradation is remarkable in the time zone of the night when the Internet is crowded especially (from around 23:00). If it thinks that service will be received in comparatively good quality, although the present condition will be choosing the time zone of early morning with little traffic, or daytime, and connecting, the user who can choose such a utilization-time band is restricted. in order to meet the demand of wanting to receive quality service just at time to use, the carrier (it is -- and ISP) which owns only limited network resources (throughput of a band and various equipments etc.) must consider how (two or more sorts) the service according to the quality classes should be offered by defining quality classes to each user from whom a demand differs in a subscriber hold router and its appearance circuit

[0011] Then, it is in offering the equipment which realizes the method of specifying how the 1st purpose of this invention just assigning [how / (two or more kinds)] a user those classes by defining quality classes, and based on which information item the class change being made, and this method.

[0012] Moreover, if the bottleneck in the Internet use in the present condition is examined, although sufficient band is assigned to the access line and access network which connect ISP and a user, it turns out that the quality of the Internet use becomes settled by the band of the throughput of a router, or the trunk line in ISP, and the band of the circuit within the Internet. Moreover, a facility of ISP (carrier) is based and installed [design and] in prediction of the throughput (the amount of

information transfer) of the user over the future. From here, the maximum transfer rate which becomes settled from the band of an access line is independently considered [defining beforehand the average throughput which the user uses by the contract, and] among users. In this case, although communication by the transfer rate beyond the average throughput defined beforehand is possible for him as long as other conditions in a network allow if a user is a short time, when the throughput within 1 hour, one day, or a certain said fixed time is over the throughput defined beforehand, for example, he shall receive a certain penalty.

[0013] Therefore, the 2nd purpose of this invention is to offer the method of giving a penalty to the user, when a packet is superfluously sent out without protecting the throughput in a certain unit time beforehand set within fixed time each user to be.

[0014] Furthermore, although it is also important to guarantee the time delay within each router in order to maintain the quality of the Internet, when – and the time delay which comes out are given in that case, you have to distribute a time delay to each router on a path.

[0015] Then, the 3rd purpose of this invention is to offer the delay distribution value determination method on the candidate connection for guaranteeing the time delay within each above-mentioned router.

[0016]

[Means for Solving the Problem] Two or more quality classes are defined beforehand, and it is the control method of the quality classes for every user in the case of offering the Internet service according to the quality classes for every user to a user through a telecommunication network, and the utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method of this invention measures the utilization time of the user within predetermined time, and reconfigures the quality classes to the user concerned according to a user's measured utilization time.

[0017] That is, to the user who receives the Internet service, according to the service utilization time (connect time) in unit time with the latest, the quality classes about the quality in the network to the user (a Quality of service:allocation band, the existence of a guarantee of a time delay, guarantee of delay fluctuation) are changed, and this raises or lowers service grade in a telecommunication network in this invention. Quality classes shall be defined in some numbers beforehand. It assumes that sufficient band is assigned to the access network, and this control is performed for example, the inside of a subscriber router, and for the appearance circuit of a subscriber router.

[0018] The example of changing quality classes according to the utilization time was not considered by the former about the procedure again, either.

[0019] "Quality classes" here is the sets of the "maximum allocation band" and the "maximum permissible time delay" which are guaranteed to for example, each user, and the "maximum permission delay fluctuation." Hereafter, an "allocation band", a "time delay", and "delay fluctuation" are used.

[0020] You may make it lower quality classes as a penalty by the utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method of this invention to the user (that is, for a packet to be sent exceeding the throughput value a contract of was made) who defines the contract value and breaks the contract value in a throughput to each user independently of quality classes furthermore.

[0021] The delay distribution value determination method of this invention can be set when offering the Internet service to a user through a telecommunication network. While being the determination method of a delay distribution value for each router and receiving the delay desired value of – end from each user in the case of a connection receptionist And the root of – end is defined, the information about the confusion condition of each router on the root is collected, and the delay distribution value for every router is determined according to confusion condition.

[0022] The guarantee-of-quality system of this invention is a guarantee-of-quality system which two or more quality classes are defined beforehand, and offers the Internet service according to the quality classes for every user to a user through a telecommunication network. The router which connects a user and the Internet and can perform control of the transmission quality for every user, The user history database which stores in each user's utilization time from a router the information which the quality test section which collects ***** and the quality test section collected, A user history database is referred to and it has the quality determination section which determines the quality classes of the user concerned based on the utilization time of the user within predetermined time, and the quality control section which directs control of the transmission quality about the user concerned to a router according to the determined quality classes.

[0023] Furthermore, the quality classes of plurality [system / guarantee-of-quality / another / of this invention] beforehand are defined. The router which is the guarantee-of-quality system which offers the Internet service according to the quality classes for every user to a user through a telecommunication network, connects a user and the Internet, and can perform control of the transmission quality for every user, The quality test section which collects ***** from a router to each user's throughput, The user Bahnung information database which stores the information which the quality test section collected, As opposed to the user who communicates by the throughput which compared with the throughput of the user concerned the contract value of the throughput defined for every user independently of quality classes with reference to the user Bahnung information database, and exceeded the contract value It has the quality determination section which reconfigures the quality classes whose transmission quality is a low rank more, and the quality control section which directs control of the transmission quality about the user concerned to a router according to the quality classes which reconfigured.

[0024]

[Embodiments of the Invention] Next, the gestalt of desirable operation of this invention is explained with reference to a drawing.

[0025] First, the utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method based on this invention is explained. This method is set to ISP (Internet service provider) etc. As opposed to the user who specifies two or more quality classes beforehand about the quality in a network (an allocation band, the certified value of a time delay, certified value of delay fluctuation, etc.), and receives the Internet service through the ISP Quality classes are changed according to the service utilization time (connect time) in unit time with the user's latest, and this performs quality control of raising or lowering service grade for every user. In fact, in the subscriber router which holds a user, the priority of processing of the packet for every user is changed, or this quality control is performed by being adjusting the band assigned to the packet for every user on the appearance circuit (circuit by the side of the Internet) of a subscriber router. Here, it is assumed that sufficient band is assigned to access networks (access line 75 in drawing 8 etc.).

[0026] Although how quality classes are specified relates to the management policy of each ISP etc. closely, about the base element which constitutes this, the following proposal will be mentioned in defining the "quality classes" described here.

[0027] (1) charge (2) a quality of service — the combination of these — (A) (B) to which either is fixed to and another side is changed Both are changed simultaneously and it is possible to consider [of two proposals] the combination.

[0028] Furthermore, the following two kinds can be considered with the (A) proposal.

[0029] (A-1) Change charge regularity and quality according to the amount of times, a time band, etc. (A-2). A charge and quality

shall be the methods which interlock and change independently, and the (B) proposal to which quality regularity and a charge are changed according to traffic volume, a time zone, etc. shall control quality classes here based on this (B) proposal.

[0030] About the definition of quality classes, assignment to the user of quality classes, and change of quality classes, the following setup is considered with the gestalt of this operation. Namely, K quality classes (C_1 -creatine kinase) are prepared by making "a user's utilization time T in the latest N hours" into a parameter. The band corresponding to it in each quality classes is assigned. The thing of the "the user's utilization time T in the latest N hours" specified for every quality classes as mentioned above is called standard utilization time. However, the specified maximum is assigned to a basic band (the minimum guarantee band) and creatine kinase by C_1 as an "allocation band." This band is an allocation band (to the user) in the appearance circuit of a subscriber router. Furthermore, the so-called "delay fluctuation guarantee" is made. [say / suppressing "guarantee of a time delay" of suppressing delay of the packet within the router concerned below to a certain value about a certain connection more than a certain class CL, and the delay fluctuation of the packet outputted from a router below to the value of the delay fluctuation of the packet sequence of arrival (input)] That is, the "allocation band" and "the existence of a delay guarantee" from which quality classes are distinguished by the utilization time in "latest, and "the existence of a delay fluctuation guarantee" are defined by an equal user's set." A judgment of this quality-classes change execution propriety is periodically made on every unit time (U hours) of a certain to each user.

[0031] The fundamental view about quality-classes change is as follows.

[0032] - The quality classes in U hours next to this user are fundamentally determined by class division of Table 1. however, the case where quality classes are upgraded -- one every class -- it is -- in addition -- and when the empty band which assigns a new band exists in this router, it restricts When the grade down of the quality classes is carried out, change of two or more classes **** is allowed. That is, change in arbitrary classes is enabled.

[0033] - A setup the user who newly became Class L guarantees a time delay and delay fluctuation to be is made. On the contrary, these guarantees are canceled when it is changed into the following classes from the class more than L ($L-1$).

[0034] A change of the quality classes by the above algorithm is not simultaneously made to all users, and it confirms whether choose one user at a time and to fulfill each above-mentioned conditions, and changes the user's quality classes, makes and performs according to the check result. Therefore, as the turn of the user to whom this algorithm is applied, i.e., a user's selection method, the following three proposals can be considered, for example.

[0035] (a) (b) chosen at random (c) chosen from the user of the quality classes of a high order Although these proposals chosen from the user of low-ranking quality classes are the cures for the propriety of class change in the order of arrival being judged, they are concerned with the strategy whether giving priority to the user of which class, and are chosen from one [upper] of the three proposals according to a situation.

[0036] In addition, about grasp of the accumulation utilization time each user's moon concerned, and the determination of a use charge, a well-known charge determination flow for the ends of the month which is used by the existing ISP is used.

[0037] Thus, although defined "quality classes" and a "charge" can consider the case of being independent of mutual, and the relation which depends, they can consider a setup as shown in the next table 1 and Table 2 as an example in the case of the former.

[0038]

[Table 1]

品質 クラス	直近N時間での 利用時間T (時間)	割当帯域 (kb/s)	遅延時間 保証	遅延揺らぎ 保証
C_1	$0 \sim T_1$	B_1 (基本帯域)	無	無
C_2	$T_1 \sim T_2$	B_2	無	無
...	無	無
C_L	$T_{L-1} \sim T_L$	B_L	有	有
...	有	有
C_K	$T_{K-1} \sim T_K (=N)$	B_{\max} (最大帯域)	有	有

[0039]

[Table 2]

その月の累積利用時間S (時間)	料金 (円)
$0 \sim S_1$	α_1
$S_1 \sim S_2$	α_2
...	...
$S_N \sim$	α_{\max}

that is, the thing which the utilization time T of the latest [example / this] improves, so that quality's is long, and it continues using as it is -- just -- being alike -- it is the example of a setting of arriving at the maximum quota band However, the fixed amount class Cf ($C_1 < C_f < \text{creatine kinase}$, charge: $\alpha_f < \alpha_{\max}$, delay, and those with a delay fluctuation guarantee) shall be formed separately, and there shall be no class change by the utilization time in this class.

[0040] Drawing 1 is the block diagram showing the composition of the quality control equipment which constitutes the guarantee-of-quality system for performing the utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method mentioned above.

[0041] In the following explanation, an allocation band is an allocation band in the appearance circuit of a subscriber router which

holds the target user, and a time delay and delay fluctuation are the values in this subscriber router. Moreover, quality or the transmission quality shall mean these allocation bands, a time delay, and delay fluctuation, and other items (for example, a packet loss factor, a throughput, etc.) shall not be included.

[0042] This quality control equipment 11 controls a router 10, and performs the above-mentioned utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method. A router 10 is the subscriber router 74 or the relay router 76 in drawing 8 here. What can set the band allocation by the side of an appearance circuit, the maximum time delay, the maximum delay fluctuation, etc. to every user (IP address), and can report the use band of the utilization time or packet data to it for every user as a router 10 is used. The charge display 12 for displaying a user's toll has connected with quality control equipment 11.

[0043] The timer 101 which supplies a trigger signal to quality control equipment 11 at each part in quality control equipment 11. The user selection section 102 which chooses the user set as the object of the algorithm mentioned above for change of quality classes. The quality determination section 103 which performs the algorithm mentioned above about the user chosen in the user selection section 102, and generates the quality information for every user. The quality control section 104 which directs setup/release of the band allocation about the user who corresponds to a router 10, delay, and a fluctuation guarantee based on the quality information from the quality determination section 103. The quality test section 105 which measures the communication quality in a network based on the router data (information on utilization-time surveillance, a packet data use band, etc.) from a router 10. The band database 106 which stores the router data acquired by the quality test section 105 (DB). The user history database 107 which stores a user's history information, and the charge determination section 108 which determines the charge for every user. The charge display 109 and ** which are displayed on the charge display 12 in the charge which should charge each user based on the charge data for every user which gave the data demand to the charge determination section 108, and was obtained as a result are prepared.

[0044] In case it determines the quality information for every user, the quality determination section 103 requires router data from the band database 106, acquires router data, and requires user data of a user history database, and acquires user historical data. The quality determination section 103 determines quality information based on the router data and user historical data which were these-acquired. The user history database 107 requires user data from the quality test section 105, and stores the user data obtained by it. Furthermore, the charge determination section 108 performs a data demand to the user history database 107, and determines the charge for every user based on the accumulation utilization-time data for every user obtained as a result.

[0045] Drawing 2 is a graph which shows an example of change of the quality classes to the utilization time, and shows how quality classes changed in connection with transition and it of the utilization time T about a certain user.

[0046] Drawing 3 is a flow chart which shows the procedure for performing concretely processing mentioned above. To each user, the processing shown here grasps the utilization time T in the latest N hours, assigns the quality classes (and corresponding band) by it, if it is required, it will perform execution or release of a time delay and a delay fluctuation guarantee, and it is characterized by performing propriety judgment of execution of class change etc. Quality classes "the user set as the object of change processing shall choose at random. In drawing 3, T expresses the utilization time in the user's selected latest N hours. Cn expresses the quality classes by a user's selected present, and Bn shows the allocation band by a user's selected present. Bnext shows the allocation band in the next time zone to this user, W shows the total band which can assign the target router, and Btotal shows the allocation band by the present of the target router. A time delay and delay fluctuation shall be guaranteed in the class more than CL. Furthermore, they are $T_0=0$, $T_k=N$, and $B_k=B_{max}$.

[0047] First, if there is nothing, it judges whether there is any class change user (Step 201), and processing is ended as it is, and if it is, one user will be chosen at random from candidate users (Step 202). It is set as $i=0$ (Step 203), only 1 increments i (Step 204), and it judges whether it is $C_i=C_n$ (Step 205), and if it is not $C_i=C_n$, it will return to Step 204. It is in the number of a user's present quality classes chosen as Variable i entering by this. Then, it is set as $j=0$ (Step 206), only 1 increments j (Step 207), and it judges whether it is $T_j-i < T_j$ (Step 208), and if this inequality is not materialized, it returns to Step 207. By this, the number (refer to Table 1) of the quality classes corresponding to the utilization time in the N latest hours of a user will go into Variable j.

[0048] Next, if it is not $B_j > B_i$, after it compares B_j with B_i (Step 209), and setting Bnext as B_j in Step 212 (i.e., since the grade down of a user's quality classes is carried out at the thing corresponding to the utilization-time actual result in the latest), it shifts to Step 214. It investigates whether $W-B_{total} > B_i+1-B_i$ is materialized in order to investigate whether the margin of a band is in a router on the other hand since it is the case that a user's utilization-time actual result is larger in $B_j > B_i$ (Step 210), and it supposes that it is set as $B_{next}=B_i$ since it is the case of being hard-pressed when not materialized (Step 211), namely, quality classes are not changed, and returns to Step 201 for processing of the next user. On the other hand, when the inequality of Step 210 is materialized (i.e., when there is a margin of a band), by setting up with $B_{next}=B_i+1$, only one rank upgrades quality classes (Step 213), and it shifts to Step 214.

[0049] At Step 214, in order to distinguish the quality classes which offer delay and a fluctuation guarantee, or the quality classes which is not so, it investigates whether $B_{next} > BL$ is materialized or not. If it investigates whether it is under [setting] ***** in the case of the quality classes which do not offer delay and a fluctuation guarantee (Step 215) and delay and a fluctuation guarantee are not set [be / it] to it when not materialized namely, it will return to Step 201 as it is, and if it becomes during a setup, after canceling the setup (Step 216), it returns to Step 201. On the other hand, when $B_{next} > BL$ is materialized at Step 214, if it investigates whether it is under [setting] ***** (Step 217) and becomes during a setup about delay and a fluctuation guarantee, it will return to Step 201 as it is, and if it is not [be / it] under setup, after setting up delay and a fluctuation guarantee (Step 218), it will return to Step 201.

[0050] Next, the gestalt of another operation of this invention is explained. This gestalt tends to give a penalty to the user, when a packet is superfluously sent out without protecting the throughput in a certain unit time beforehand set within fixed time each user to be. Drawing 4 is the block diagram showing the composition of the Bahnung surveillance / control unit which constitutes the guarantee-of-quality system in this case. This Bahnung surveillance / control unit 15 are the things of the almost same composition as the quality control equipment 11 shown in drawing 1, and a function, it has a timer 111, the user selection section 112, the quality determination section 113, the quality control section 114, the quality test section 115, and the band database 116, and the user Bahnung information database 117 is further formed instead of a user history database. In addition, the charge determination section and the charge display are not prepared. A router 10 will supervise an average throughput for every user, and will output the result to the quality test section 115, and the surveillance result of an average throughput will be stored in the user Bahnung information database 117. Moreover, with reference to the band database 116 and the user Bahnung information database 117, quality classes compare with the throughput of the user concerned the contract value of the

throughput independently defined for every user, a penalty is imposed to the user who communicates by the throughput beyond the contract value based on the following procedure, and, as for the quality determination section 113, the transmission quality reconfigures the quality classes which are low ranks more.

[0051] Thus, since the composition and the function of Bahnung surveillance / control unit 15 are almost the same as that of the quality control equipment shown in drawing 1, realization by the hardware which unified both in fact is possible for them. However, judgment of quality-classes change and an operation period function independently, respectively.

[0052] With the gestalt of this operation, the average throughput of each user for every unit time T_z is supervised with Bahnung surveillance / control unit 15. "The value which broke the number of bits transmitted in the time width of face T_z in this time T_z " defines this "average throughput" strictly. Hereafter, it is only called a throughput. It is fixed by the contract that it makes beforehand below into certain value θ the throughput value reported for every time width of face T_z of this to User p. When a user breaks a contract and sends a packet exceeding this θ as the average, a penalty is imposed according to the degree of the violation. With the penalty, I hear that the grade down of the quality classes about the above-mentioned allocation band is carried out, and it is. It explains using drawing 5.

[0053] the simplification of explanation in drawing 5 sake — $U=2T_z$ — it is — and a time — U_n , and Z_{2n-1} shall have lapped Since this user has received service by the utilization-time-dependent quality grade control method mentioned above, the band actually assigned by the utilization time T in the latest changes. here — a time — U_i — setting — this — a user — quality classes — (— K — one —) — it is — a degree — violation — surveillance — a time (at the time [Drawing] of Z_{2i}) — it can set — a throughput (namely, (U_i-Z_{2i}) , throughput) — θ — p — being large — a value — it was — ** — carrying out . At this time, as for a class, only 1 is immediately lowered in Z_{2i} at this time. being such — violation — there is nothing — a case — **** — a time — U_n ($n=1, 2, \dots$) — every — " — the latest — the utilization time — T — " — referring to — having — it — having followed — a class — assignment — carrying out — having . For example, when violation is performed continuously m times, a class is lowered 2 ($m-1$) classes every. since it broke continuously 3 times in drawing 5 with the time $(Z_{2(i+2)} - U_{i+3} - Z_{2(i+3)}) - 20+21+22=7$ class lowering **** That is, new quality classes when violation is performed succeeding the time of the present class being M m times are [0054].

[Equation 1]

$$\max \left\{ N - \sum_{j=1}^m 2^{(j-1)}, 1 \right\}$$

[0055] It comes to be alike. control of the class change by the utilization time, and the class change by the throughput — a time — U_n ($=Z_{2(n-1)} + 1$; $n=1, 2, \dots$) top — having collided — a case — **** — grade — the class of the method of a low is assigned Moreover, although it is not continuous breach of a contract, to the user who is in violation r times or more at the surveillance time of the q past latest, it is immediately set as a class 1 and considers as as [of a class C_1 (class which assigns a basic band)] in between at the future s surveillance time.

[0056] Drawing 6 is a flow chart which shows the concrete processing in the case of reducing a user's quality classes by the penalty. Here, Z_n expresses this time, C_n expresses the quality classes by a user's present, B_n shows the allocation band by a user's present, B_{next} shows the allocation band in the next time zone to this user, θ expresses the throughput from Z_{n-1} to Z_n , θ expresses the contract value (upper limit) of User's p throughput, and BL expresses the band of the minimum class whose quality is guaranteed. Moreover, they are $T_0=0$, $T_k=N$, and $B_k=B_{max}$.

[0057] First, it judges whether it is t at the surveillance time (Step 221), and if it is not at the surveillance time and is as it is at the waiting and surveillance time, it will judge whether it is finishing [judgment of all candidate users] (Step 222). finishing [judgment] — it is — if — finishing [it returns to Step 221 and / judgment] — it is not — if — the 1 user p is chosen at random from candidate users (Step 223), and it judges whether it is protected that it is $\theta_{tan} < \theta$, i.e., a contract value, (Step 224) When protected, it returns to Step 221, and when not protected, it judges how [that is in violation R of q times of the latest times or more] it is (Step 225). When in violation R times or more, an allocation band is continuously set as the minimum value s times from the next point in time (Step 226), and it returns to Step 221. When not in violation [R times or more] in Step 225, it considers as $j=n$ (Step 227), only 1 carries out the decrement of the j (Step 228), and it judges whether it is $\theta_{tj} < \theta$ (Step 229). If it is not $\theta_{tj} < \theta$, it will return to Step 228. By this, the continuous number of times of violation will be expressed with j .

[0058] Then, in Step 230, quality classes are set up according to the continuous number of times of violation, and it investigates whether $B_{next} > BL$ is materialized after that. If it returns to Step 221 as it is when materialized, and it investigates whether it is under [setting] ***** (Step 232) and delay and a fluctuation guarantee are not [be / it] under setup when not materialized, it will return to Step 221 as it is, and if it becomes during a setup, after canceling the setup (Step 233), it returns to Step 221.

[0059] Next, the delay distribution value determination method on the candidate connection for guaranteeing the time delay within each router is explained. Each router shall perform the following actions and each router shall take the following calculation and the responsibility for management only about the connection from the user whom he has held directly.

[0060] In a certain user's communication (connection), when distributing the delay D_e of — end to n routers via which within the net goes, the confusion condition of each router is seen, and the degree of confusion decides to assign a comparatively big delay distribution value to a large router. In this case, in a subscriber router, the root of — end shall be defined in the case of a connection receptionist. Thereby, the router in connection with a connection is decided.

[0061] When the confusion condition in the latest time T in the router i at the t_j time ($i=1, 2, \dots, n$) is expressed by weighting-factor $W(i, t_j)$, the delay distribution value D to the router i at the t_j time (i, t_j) is [0062].

[Equation 2]

$$D(i, t_j) = (D_e - \alpha) \left\{ W(i, t_j) / \left[\sum_{m=1}^n (i, t_m) \right] \right\} \quad (\alpha : \text{余裕係数})$$

[0063] It is come out and given. As this weighting factor, the residence time in each router (measurement/collection is possible using the existing probe), the activity ratio of an appearance circuit, CC (central control unit) activity ratio, average queue length, etc. are used, for example. Moreover, the information on each router used for determining this weighting factor (the residence time in a system, an appearance circuit activity ratio, CC activity ratio, average queue length, etc.) is collected by the fixed

target at (interval $t_z:t_z=t_j-t_j-1$) by the information packet and the information gathering method by the so-called execution of the ping command, and the delay distribution value of each router is updated each time. The delay distribution value of each router is notified only when it becomes a value severer than the last calculated value (namely, $D(i, t_j) < D(i, t_j-1)$). α is a margin coefficient, the confusion condition of other routers increases, the new distribution value of a certain router turns into a severe value, and when it cannot realize, it is prepared in order to absorb the part beyond the distribution delay value. Within each router, processing by the existing scheduling method is performed so that processing can be completed within the specified distribution delay value.

[0064] Drawing 7 is a flow chart which shows an example of concrete processing of this delay distribution value determination method.

[0065] First, it judges whether t is t_j at the surveillance time (Step 241), and if it is not at the surveillance time and is as it is at the waiting and surveillance time, it will judge whether it is finishing [judgment of all connections] (Step 242). If it is judgment ending, in order to wait for the next surveillance time, it shifts to Step 241. In not being judgment ending, one non-set up connection is chosen (Step 243), and information is collected from each router via which it goes (Step 244), and it calculates $D(i, t_j)$ expressed with the above-mentioned [-two number] (Step 245). Next, it is referred to as $i=0$ (Step 246), only 1 increments i (Step 247), and it judges whether i amounted to $n+1$ (Step 248). When it amounts to $n+1$ (i.e., when processing is completed to all of n sets of routers), it returns to Step 241, and when not amounting to $n+1$, it judges whether $D(i, t_j) < D(i, t_j-1)$ is materialized (Step 249). Since it is the case where it becomes a value severer than the last calculated value when $D(i, t_j) < D(i, t_j-1)$ is materialized, $D(i, t_j)$ is notified to Router i (Step 250), and it returns to Step 247. On the other hand, when $D(i, t_j) < D(i, t_j-1)$ is not materialized, it returns to Step 247 as it is.

[0066]

[Effect of the Invention] As explained above, according to this invention, a user is effective in the ability to count now upon service use of the grade to which the user is always received, when I hear that more quality service could be received, so that the utilization time in the latest became long and it sees from a service provision side.

[0067] Moreover, it is effective in being able to hold down each user's throughput to a certain average, expecting this average, and being able to use it now for a design or management according to the mechanism in which a penalty is imposed when a user uses exceeding the contract value of a throughput.

[0068] Furthermore, it can be said that it has contributed for [a part of] guarantee-of-quality realization by showing the method of defining the distribution value of the time delay of each RUTAE, as a way stage for realizing the time delay of an end-end.

[Translation done.]

* NOTICES *

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DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[Brief Description of the Drawings]

[Drawing 1] It is the block diagram showing the composition of the quality control equipment which constitutes the guarantee-of-quality system of the desirable operation gestalt of this invention.

[Drawing 2] It is the graph which shows an example of change of the quality classes to the utilization time at the time of performing class assignment based on the method of this invention.

[Drawing 3] It is the flow chart which shows an example of the procedure for performing class assignment based on the method of this invention.

[Drawing 4] It is the block diagram showing the composition of the Bahnung surveillance / control unit which constitutes the guarantee-of-quality system of another operation gestalt of this invention.

[Drawing 5] It is the graph which shows an example of change of the quality classes to the throughput in the unit time at the time of deciding to impose the penalty of lowering quality classes to the user who broke the throughput contract value.

[Drawing 6] It is the flow chart which shows the procedure in the case of imposing the penalty of lowering quality classes to the user who broke the throughput contract value.

[Drawing 7] And it is the flow chart which shows the procedure of processing of defining the delay distribution value of each router to the delay desired value of - end.

[Drawing 8] It is drawing explaining connection with the Internet through ISP (Internet service provider).

[Description of Notations]

10 Router

11 Quality Control Equipment

12 Charge Display

15 Bahnung Surveillance / Control Unit

101,111 Timer

102,112 User selection section

103,113 Quality determination section

104,114 Quality control section

105,115 Quality test section

106,116 Band database

107 User History Database

108 Charge Determination Section

109 Charge Display

117 User Bahnung Information Database

[Translation done.]

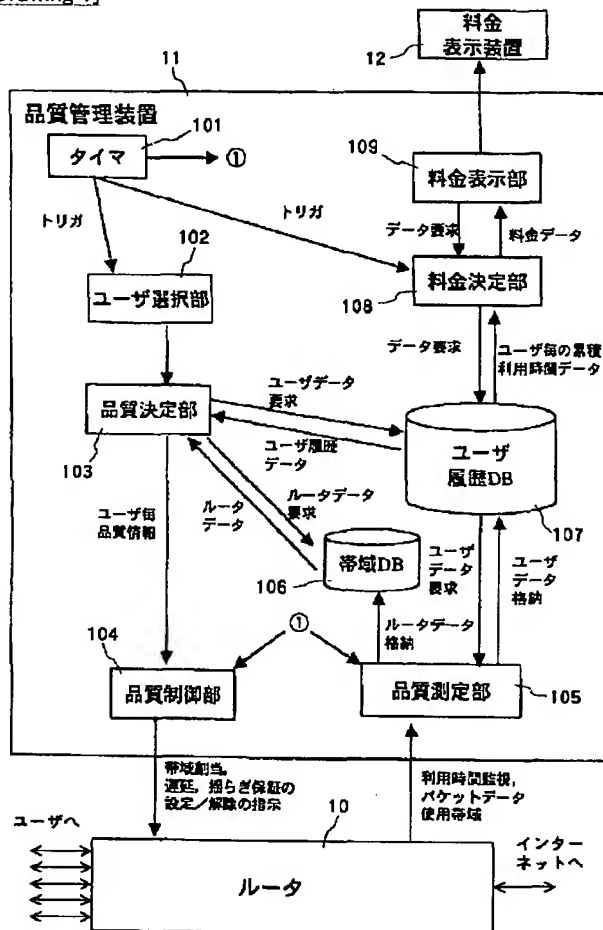
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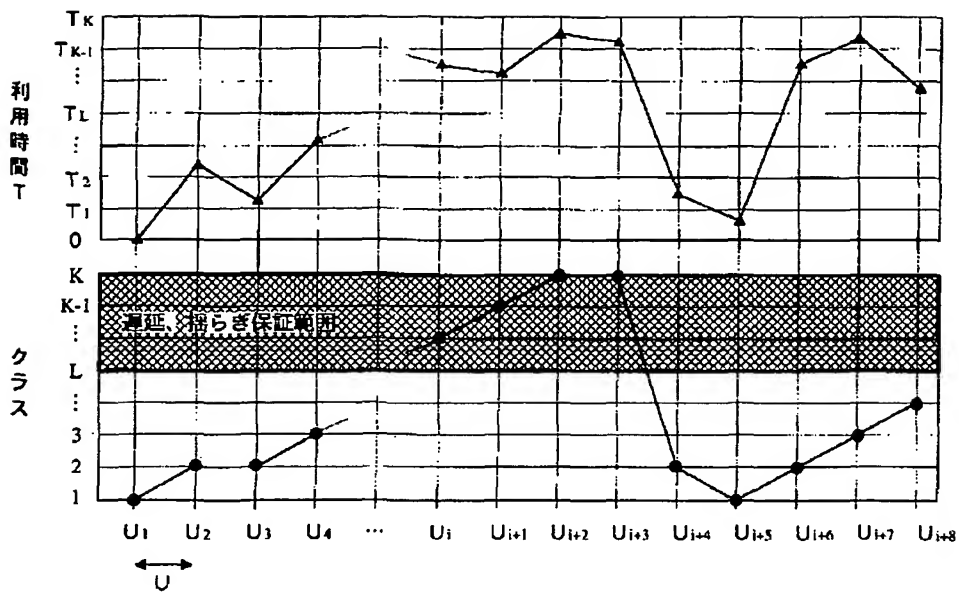
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DRAWINGS

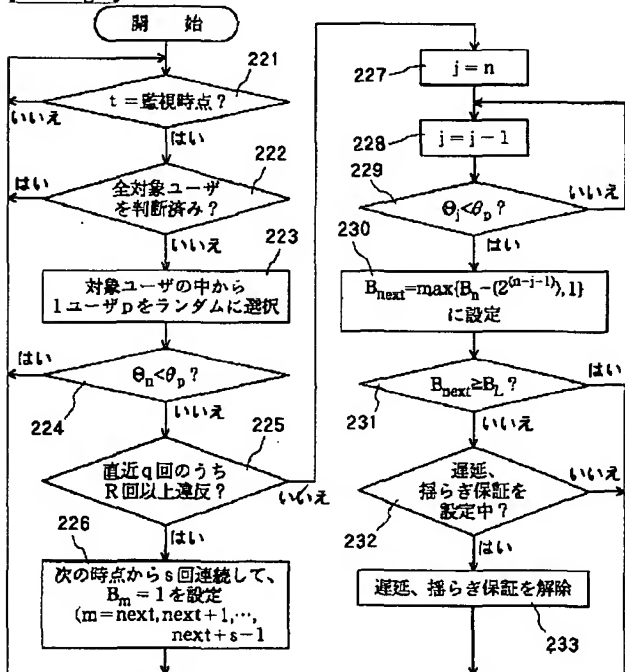
[Drawing 1]



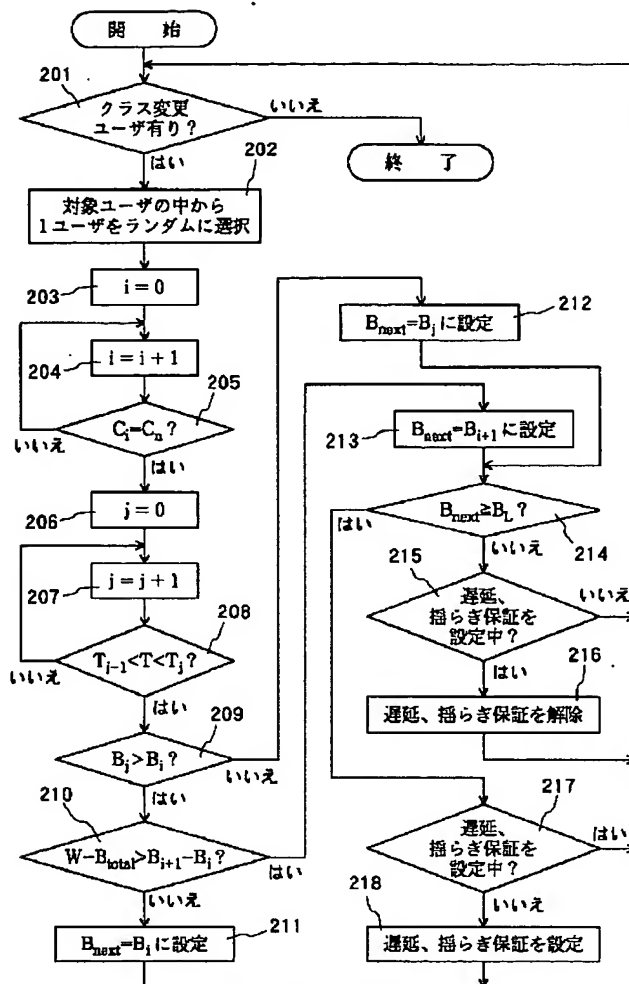
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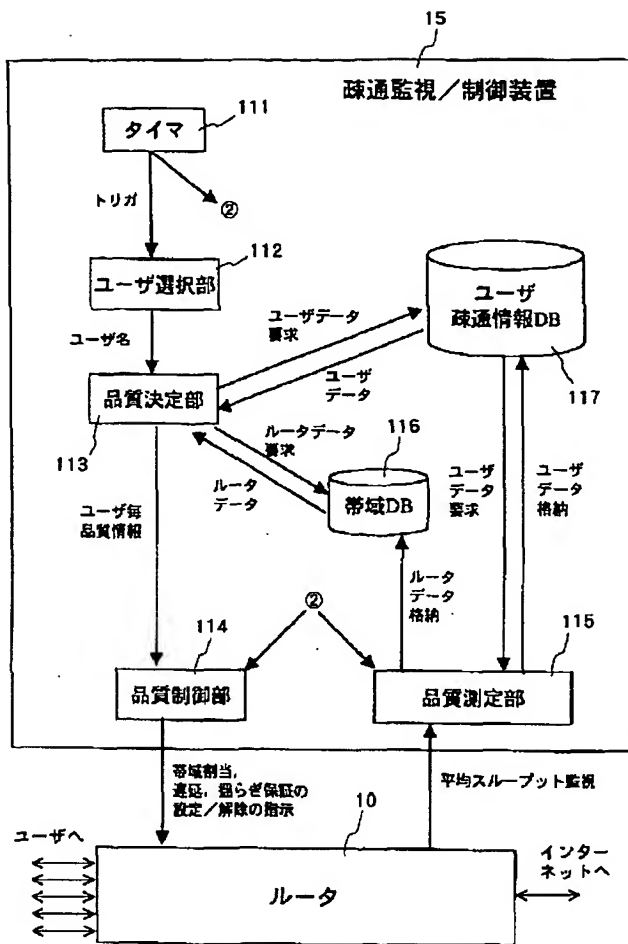
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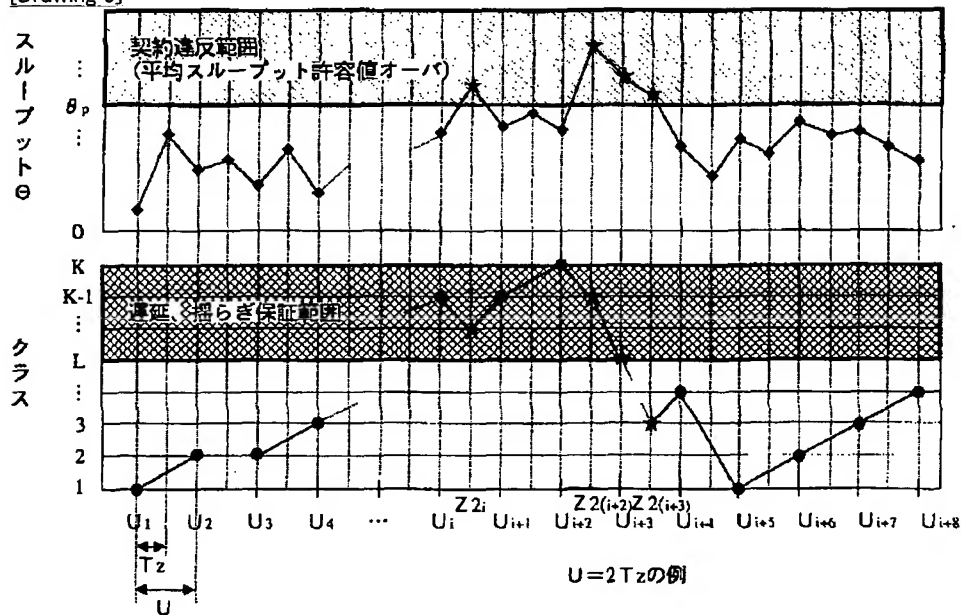
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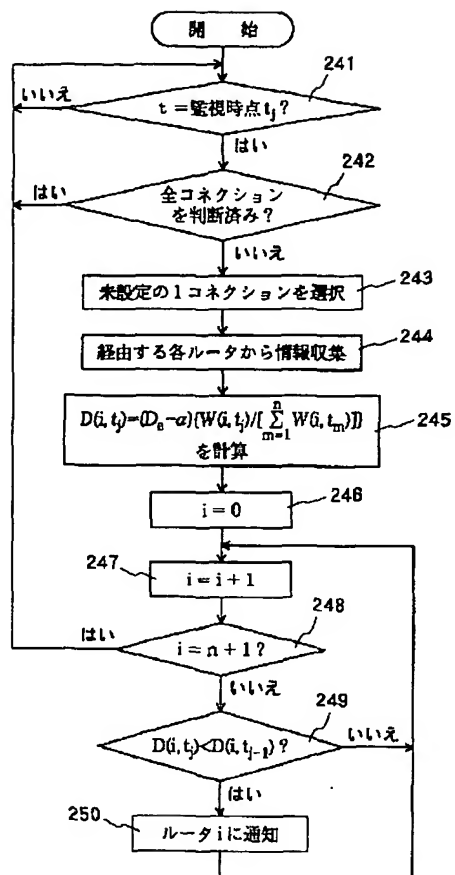
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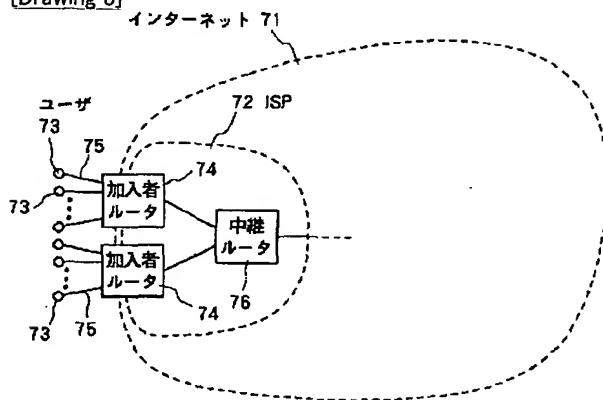
[Drawing 5]



[Drawing 7]



[Drawing 8]



[Translation done.]

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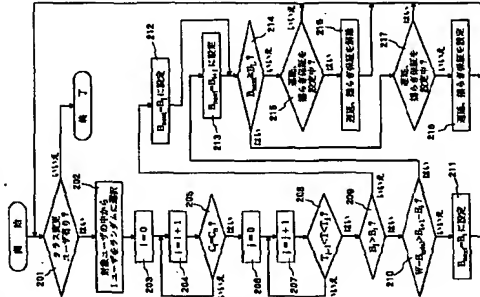
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(54) [発明の名称] 利用時間依存型品質グレード制御方法、遅延配分値決定方法及び品質保証システム

(57) [要約]
【課題】 インターネットへの接続サービスにおいて、いかにして (接続種類の) 品質クラスを定義して、どのようにしてユーザにそれらのクラスを割り当てればよいか、また、そのクラス変更はどの情報項目に基づいて行えばよいかを規定する。
【解決手段】 予め複数の品質クラスが定義され、電気通信網を介してユーザに対してユーザごとの品質クラスに成したインターネットサービスを提供する場合において、所定の時間内におけるユーザの利用時間を測定し、測定されたユーザの利用時間に応じて、当該ユーザに対する品質クラスを再設定する。具体的には、直近N時間におけるユーザの利用時間Tに、利用時間Tが乗ければ割当帯域が増大し、利用時間Tが短ければ割当帯域が減少するように、品質クラスの再設定を行う。



より、インターネット1に接続することになる。アクセス回線75や、加入者ルータ74と中継ルータ76間の中継回線を所有するキャリアが、ISP72として活動することもある。

【0004】現在、多数のISPが営業を継続しており、各ISPは、それぞれその営業方針に基づいて、インターネット接続のための料金体系を定めている。料金体系としては、利用時間に応じて月々の利用料金が増減するものが多いが、完全固定料金制のISPも存在する。代表的な料金体系を以下に例示する。

【0005】(例1) 基本料金+接続料金：この料金体系では、例えば、利用時間が月に6時間までは基本料金のみ、月に6～8時間ならば基本料金+接続料金の定額金、8時間以上は定額とする。

【0006】(例2) 接続額の利用プラン：複数のプランを設定し、ユーザが予め選択したプランをそのユーザに適用する。用意されるプランの例としては、以下のようなものがある。

・プランA：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランB：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランC：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランD：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランE：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランF：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランG：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランH：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランI：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランJ：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランK：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランL：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランM：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランN：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランO：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランP：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランQ：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランR：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランS：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランT：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランU：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランV：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランW：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランX：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランY：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランZ：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランAA：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランAB：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランAC：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランAD：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランAE：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランAF：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランAG：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランAH：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

・プランAI：月T時間まではK円、それを超えたとし

いても、定義されるクラス数がある値以下に制限されている等、使用時になんらかの制約があるものがほとんどである。

【0010】

【発明が解決しようとする課題】現時点のインターネットサービスでは、上述したように品質の保証はされておらず、輻の混雑状況により、遅延が増加したり、輻切断が起こる回数が増えたりと、必ずしも満足できる快適なサービス提供はなされていない。特に、インターネットが混雑する夜間(23時頃か)の時間帯においては、品質(接続性、遅延)劣化が顕著である。比較的良好な品質でサービスを受けようと思えば、トラヒックの少ない早朝や昼間の時間帯を選んで接続せざるを得ないのが現状であるが、そのような利用時間帯を選択できるユーザは限られている。利用したい時間にこそ高品質なサービスを受けたという要求に応えるためには、有線網資源(帯域、各種装置の処理能力等)しか所有しないキャリア(でありかつISP)は、加入者収容率しかおよびその出回率において、いかに(複数個の)品質クラスを定義して、その品質クラスに応じたサービスを要求の異なる各ユーザに対して提供すればよいかを考えなくてはならない。

【0011】そこで本発明の第1の目的は、いかにして(複数個の)品質クラスを定義して、どのようにしてユーザにそれらのクラスを割り当てればよいか、また、そのクラス変更はどの情報項目に基づいて行えばよいかを限定する方法と、この方法を実現する装置を提供することにある。

【0012】また、現状でのインターネット利用でのポータルネットワークを検討すると、ISPとユーザとを結ぶアクセス回線やアクセス網には十分な帯域が割り当てられているものの、ルータの処理能力やISPの中継回線の帯域、インターネット内での回線の帯域によってインターネット利用の品質が定まることが分る。また、ISP(やキャリア)の設備は、将来にわたるユーザのマルチプロット(情報転送量)の予測に基づいて設計、設置されるものである。ことから、ユーザとの間で、アクセス回線の帯域から定まる最大転送速度とは別に、そのユーザが利用する平均マルチプロットを契約で予め決めておくことが考えられている。この場合、ユーザは、短時間であれば、マルチプロット内の他の条件が許す限り、予め定めた平均マルチプロットを超えた転送速度での通信が可能であるが、例えば、1時間とか1日とかいった一定時間内におけるマルチプロットが予め定めたマルチプロットを超えている場合には、何らかのペナルティを受けるものとする。

【0013】したがって本発明の第2の目的は、各ユーザがある一定時間内において、前もって定められているある単位時間におけるマルチプロットを守らないでマルチプロットを過剰に送出した場合、そのユーザに対してペナルティを与える方法を提供することにある。

【0014】さらに、インターネットの品質を維持するためには、各ルータ内での遅延時間を保証することも重要であるが、その場合、エンドエンドでの遅延時間が与えられたときに、経路上にある各ルータに遅延時間を配分しなければならぬ。

【0015】そこで本発明の第3の目的は、上記の各ルータ内での遅延時間を保証するための対象ネットワーク上での遅延配分決定方法を提供することにある。

【0016】

【課題を解決するための手段】本発明の利用時間依存型品質クラス制御方法は、予め複数の品質クラスが定義され、電気通信網を介してユーザに対してユーザごとの品質クラスに応じたインターネットサービスを提供する場合における、ユーザごとの品質クラスの制御方法であって、所定の時間内におけるユーザの利用時間を測定し、測定されたユーザの利用時間に応じて、当該ユーザに対する品質クラスを再設定する。

【0017】すなわち本発明では、電気通信網において、インターネットサービスを受けるユーザに対して、その直近のある単位時間でのサービス利用時間(接続時間)に応じて、そのユーザに対するネットワーク内の品質(Quality of service：帯域帯域、遅延時間の保証、有線、遅延縮小の保証)に関する品質クラスを変更し、これによりサービスレベルを上げたり下げたりする。品質クラスは、予め数値で定義されているものとする。アクセス網には十分な帯域が割り当てられていると仮定して、この制御は、例えば、加入者ルータ内および加入者ルータの出回率を対象に行われる。

【0018】利用時間に応じて品質クラスを変えという例はこれまでにないし、またその手順についても考えられていなかった。

【0019】ここでいう「品質クラス」とは、例えば、各ユーザに対して保証する「最大帯域帯域」、「最大許容遅延時間」及び「最大許容遅延縮小」のセットのことである。以下、「帯域帯域」、「遅延時間」、「遅延縮小」を使用する。

【0020】さらに本発明の利用時間依存型品質クラス制御方法は、品質クラスとは独立に各ユーザに対してマルチプロットを契約値を定めおき、その契約値に違反する(つまり契約されたマルチプロット値を超えてマルチプロットを送る)ユーザに対しては、ペナルティとして品質クラスを下げるようにしてもよい。

【0021】本発明の遅延配分決定方法は、電気通信網を介してユーザに対してインターネットサービスを提供する場合における、各ルータに対する遅延配分値の決定方法であって、ネットワーク受け付けの際に、各ユーザからのエンドエンドの遅延要求値を受け付けるとともに、エンドエンドのルートを定め、ルート上の各ルータの混雑具合に関する情報を収集し、遅延具合に応じ

てルータごとの遅延配分値を決定する。

【0022】本発明の品質保証システムは、予め複数の品質クラスが定義され、電気通信網を介してユーザに対してユーザごとの品質クラスに応じたインターネットサービスを提供する品質保証システムであって、ユーザとインターネットとを接続し、ユーザごとに伝送品質の制御を実行できるルータと、ルータから各ユーザの利用時間に関する情報を収集する品質測定部と、品質測定部が収集した情報を格納するユーザ履歴データベースと、ユーザ履歴データベースを参照し、所定の時間内におけるユーザの利用時間に基づいて当該ユーザの品質クラスを決定する品質決定部と、決定した品質クラスに応じて当該ユーザに関する伝送品質の制御をルータに指示する品質制御部とを有する。

【0023】さらに本発明の別の品質保証システムは、予め複数の品質クラスが定義され、電気通信網を介してユーザに対してユーザごとの品質クラスに応じたインターネットサービスを提供する品質保証システムであって、ユーザとインターネットとを接続し、ユーザごとに伝送品質の制御を実行できるルータと、ルータから各ユーザのマルチプロットに関する情報を収集する品質測定部と、品質測定部が収集した情報を格納するユーザ履歴データベースと、ユーザ履歴データベースを参照し、品質クラスとは独立に各ユーザごとに定められたマルチプロットの契約値と当該ユーザのマルチプロットとを比較し、契約値を超えたマルチプロットで通信するユーザに対して、伝送品質がより低下する品質クラスを再設定する品質決定部と、再設定した品質クラスに応じて当該ユーザに関する伝送品質の制御をルータに指示する品質制御部とを有する。

【0024】

【発明の実施の形態】次に、本発明の好ましい実施の形態について、図面を参照して説明する。

【0025】まず、本発明に基づく利用時間依存型品質クラス制御方法について説明する。この方法は、ISP(インターネットサービスプロバイダ)などにおいて、ネットワーク内の品質(帯域帯域、遅延時間の保証値、遅延縮小の保証値など)に関して複数の品質クラスを予め規定し、そのISPを通じてインターネットサービスを受けるユーザに対して、そのユーザの直近のある単位時間でのサービス利用時間(接続時間)に応じて品質クラスを変更し、これにより、ユーザごとのサービスレベルを上げたり下げたりするという品質制御を行うものである。この品質制御は、実際には、ユーザを収容する加入者ルータにおいてユーザごとのマルチプロットの優先順位を変更したり、加入者ルータの出回率(インターネット側の回線)上でユーザごとのマルチプロットに割り当てられる帯域を調節することで、実行される。ここではアクセス網(図8におけるアクセス回線75など)には十分な帯域が割り当てられていると仮定する。

利用時間Tの推移とそれに伴って品質クラスがどのように変化したかを示している。

【0046】図3は上述した処理を具体的に実行するための手順を示すフローチャートである。ここで示す処理は、各ユーザに対して、最近N時間における利用時間Tを把握し、それによる品質クラス（及び対応する帯域）の割り当てを行い、必要であれば遅延時間及び遅延帯らぎ保証の実行または解除を行い、クラス変更の実行の可否判断を実行することなどを特徴とするものである。品質クラスの変更処理の対象となるユーザは、ランダムに選択されたユーザの現在までの品質クラスを表し、B_{min}は選択されたユーザの現在までの積当帯域を示し、B_{min}はこのユーザに対する次の時間帯での積当帯域を示し、Wは対象とするルータの割り当て可能な総帯域を示し、B_{min}は対象とするルータの現在までの積当帯域を示している。C_jはC_j以上のクラスでは、遅延時間、遅延帯らぎが保証されているものとする。さらに、T₀=0、T₁=N、B₁=B_{min}である。

【0047】まず、クラス変更ユーザがあるかどうかを判断し（ステップ2.01）、なければそのまま処理を終了し、あれば、対象ユーザの中からユーザをランダムに選択する（ステップ2.02）。i=0に設定し（ステップ2.03）、iを1だけインクリメントし（ステップ2.04）、C_i=C_jかどうかを判断し（ステップ2.05）、C_i=C_jでなければステップ2.04に戻る。これにより、変数iには、選択されたユーザの現在の品質クラスの番号が入ることになる。その後、j=0に設定し（ステップ2.06）、jを1だけインクリメントし（ステップ2.07）、T_j＜T＜T_{j+1}かどうかを判断し（ステップ2.08）、この不等式が成立していなければステップ2.07に戻る。これにより、変数jには、ユーザの現在のN時間での利用時間に対応する品質クラスの番号（数1参照）が入ることになる。

【0048】次に、B_jとB₁とを比較し（ステップ2.09）、B_j＞B₁でなければステップ2.12においてB_{min}をB_jに設定してから、すなわちユーザの品質クラスを直近での利用時間実績に対応するものにランダム化してから、ステップ2.14に移行する。一方、B_j＞B₁の場合は、ユーザの利用時間実績の方が大きい場合であれば、ルータに帯域の余裕があるかどうかを調べると、W-B_{min}＞B_j-B₁を成立するかを調べると、W-B_{min}＞B_j-B₁を成立しないこととし、そのユーザの処理のためにステップ2.01に戻る。一方、ステップ2.10の不等式が成立する場合すなわち帯域の余裕がある場合には、B_{min}=B_jと設定することにより品質クラスを1ランクだけグレードアップし（ステ

ップ2.13）、ステップ2.14に移行する。

【0049】ステップ2.14では、遅延、繰らぎ保証を行う品質クラスかそうでない品質クラスかを判断するために、B_{min}≧B_jが成立するかどうかを調べる。成立しない場合は、遅延、繰らぎ保証を行わない品質クラスの場合には、遅延、繰らぎ保証を設定中かどうかを調べ（ステップ2.15）、設定中であればそのままステップ2.01に戻る。設定中ならばその設定を解除してから（ステップ2.16）、ステップ2.01に戻る。一方、ステップ2.14でB_{min}＜B_jが成立する場合には、遅延、繰らぎ保証を設定中かどうかを調べ（ステップ2.17）、設定中ならばそのままステップ2.01に戻り、設定中でなければ、遅延、繰らぎ保証を設定してから（ステップ2.18）、ステップ2.01に戻る。

【0050】次に、本発明の別の実施の形態について説明する。この形態は、各ユーザがある一定時間内において、前もって定められているある単位時間におけるスループットを守らないでパケットを過剰に送出した場合、そのユーザに対してペナルティを与えようとするものである。図4は、この場合の品質保証システムを構成する遅延監視/制御装置の構成を示すブロック図である。この遅延監視/制御装置15は、図1に示す品質管理装置11とはほぼ同様の構成、機能のものであり、タイマ11、ユーザ選択部112、品質決定部113、品質制御部114、品質測定部115及び帯域デューバース116を備え、さらに、ユーザ履歴デューバース117を備え、さらに、ユーザ履歴デューバース117が設けられたものである。なお、料金決定部及び料金表示部は設けられていない。ルータ10は、ユーザごとに平均スループットの監視を行ってその結果を品質測定部115に出力しており、ユーザ毎通信帯デューバース117には、平均スループットの監視結果が格納されることになる。また、品質決定部113は、帯域デューバース116とユーザ毎通信帯デューバース117を参照し、品質クラスとは独立に各ユーザごとに定められたスループットの契約値と当該ユーザのスループットとを比較し、契約値を越えたスループットで通信するユーザに対して、下記の手段に基づいてペナルティを課し、伝送品質がより下位である品質クラスを再設定する。

【0051】このように、遅延監視/制御装置15の構成や機能は、図1に示す品質管理装置とはほぼ同様であるため、実際には両方を一体化したハードウェアでの実現が可能である。ただし、品質クラス変更の判断、作動周期は、それぞれ独立に機能する。

【0052】この実施の形態では、遅延監視/制御装置15により、単位時間T₁ごとの各ユーザの平均スループットを監視している。この「平均スループット」は、厳密には、「時間幅T₁において送信されたビット数、この時間T₁で終了した面」で定義する。以下、単にスループットと呼ぶ。この時間幅T₁ごとにレポートされる

スループット値は、ユーザに対しては、前もってある値θ₀以下とするよう契約により取り決めてある。もし、ユーザが契約に違反し、平均値としてこのθ₀を越えてパケットを送った場合には、その違反の度合いに応じてペナルティを課す。そのペナルティとは、前述の積当帯域に関する品質クラスをグレードダウンさせるということである。図5を用いて説明する。

【0053】図5では、説明の簡化のため、U=2T₀で、かつ時点U₁とZ_{2i}は重なっているものとしていて、このユーザは、上述した利用時間依存型品質グレード制御方法によるサービスを受けているので、最近での利用時間T₁により実績に割り当てられる帯域は変化すること、時点U₁においてこのユーザの品質クラスは（K-1）であり、次の遅延監視時点（図ではZ_{2i}の時点）におけるスループット（すなわち（U₁〜Z_{2i}）でのスループット）がθ₀より大きい値だったとする。このとき、この時点Z_{2i}において即座にクラスは1だけ下げられる。このような違反がない場合には、時点U₁（n=1, 2, ...）ごとに「最近での利用時間T₁」が参照され、それに従ったクラスの割り当てが行われる。例えば、m回連続して違反が行われた場合には、クラスは、2（m-1）クラスずつ下げられる。図5では、時点（Z_{2i}≧U₁）とZ_{2i}は重なっているものと3回連続して違反したため、2+2+2+2=8クラス下げられる。すなわち、現在のクラスがMであるときに、m回連続して違反が行われたときの新しい品質クラスは、

【数1】

$$\max \left\{ N - \sum_{j=1}^m 2^j, 0 \right\}$$

【0055】になる。もし、利用時間によるクラス変更と、スループットによるクラス変更の制御が時点U₁（=Z_{2i}）においてn=1, 2, ...）上でかつ合った場合には、グレードの低い方のクラスが割り当てられる。また、連続しての契約違反ではないが、過去の最近q回の監視時点において、r回以上違反しているユーザに対しては、即座にクラス1に設定し、以後のq回の監視時点の間はクラスC₁（基本帯域を割り当てるクラス）のままである。

【0056】図6は、ペナルティによりユーザの品質クラスを低下させる場合の具体的な処理を示すフローチャートである。ここで、Z_{2i}は現時点を表し、C_jはユーザの現在までの品質クラスを表し、B_{min}はこのユーザに対する次の時間帯での積当帯域を示し、θ₀はZ_{2i}からZ_{2i+1}までのスループットを表し、θ₀はユーザのペナルティの契約値（上限値）を表し、B₁は品質保証される最低クラスの帯域を表している。また、T₀=0、T₁=N、B₁=B_{min}である。

【0057】まず、iが監視時点であるかどうかを判断し（ステップ2.21）、監視時点であればそのまま待ち、監視時点であれば、全対象ユーザを判断済みかどうかを判断する（ステップ2.22）。判断済みであればステップ2.21に戻り、判断済みでなければ、対象ユーザの中から1ユーザをランダムに選択し（ステップ2.23）、θ₀＜θかどうか、すなわち契約値が守られているかどうかを判断する（ステップ2.24）。守られている場合にはステップ2.21に戻り、守られていない場合には、直近のq回のうちR回以上違反しているかどうかを判断する（ステップ2.25）。R回以上違反している場合には、次の時点からs回連続して積当帯域を最低値に設定し（ステップ2.26）、ステップ2.21に戻る。ステップ2.25においてR回以上は違反していない場合には、j=nとし（ステップ2.27）、jを1だけデクリメントし（ステップ2.28）、θ₀＜θかどうかを判断する（ステップ2.29）。θ₀＜θでなければステップ2.28に戻る。これにより、連続した違反回数がjで表されることになる。

【0058】その後、ステップ2.30において、連続した違反回数に依って品質クラスが設定され、その後、B_{min}がB_jが成立するかどうかを調べ、成立する場合にはそのままステップ2.21に戻り、成立しない場合には、遅延、繰らぎ保証を設定中かどうかを調べ（ステップ2.32）、設定中でなければそのままステップ2.21に戻り、設定中ならばその設定を解除してから（ステップ2.33）、ステップ2.21に戻る。

【0059】次に、各ルータ内での遅延時間を保証するための対象コネクション上での遅延配分値決定方法について説明する。以下のアクションを実行するのは各ルータであり、各ルータは自分が直収収容しているユーザからのコネクションに関する、以下の計算、管理の責任を負うものとする。

【0060】あるユーザの通信（コネクション）において、エンドポイントの遅延D₁を、網内の経由するn個のルータに対して配分する場合において、各ルータの遅延割合をみて、遅延の比重が大きいルータには比較的大きな遅延配分値を割り当てることとする。この場合、コネクション受け付けの際に、加入ルータにおいて、エンドポイントのルータを定めるものとする。これにより、コネクションに関わるルータが1（1=1, 2, ..., n）での直近の時間Tで遅延割合を、重み係数W（i, i）で表現すると、i時点におけるルータiへの遅延配分値D（i, i）は、

【0062】

$$D(i, t_j) = (0_e - \alpha) \left\{ \frac{D(i, t_j)}{\sum_{j=1}^n D(i, t_j)} \right\} \quad (\alpha: \text{余裕係数})$$

【0063】で与えられる。この重み係数としては、例えば各ルータ内の滞在時間（既存のプロープを用いて測定/収集可能）、出回線の使用率、CC（中央制御装置）使用率、平均キュー長等を用いる。また、この重み係数を決定するのを用いる各ルータの稼働（系内滞在時間、出回線使用率、CC使用率、平均キュー長など）は、情報パッケージ、いわゆるpingコマンドの実行による情報収集方法により定期的に（間隔 t_1 ： $t_1 = t_j - t_{j-1}$ ）に収集され、そのつど各ルータの遅延配分値は更新される。各ルータの遅延配分値は、前回の計算値より小さい値になった場合（すなわち $D(i, t_j) < D(i, t_{j-1})$ ）にのみ通知される。 α は余裕係数であり、他ルータの混雑具合が増加し、あるルータの新しい配分値が小さい値になり、実現不可能な場合に、その配分値を越えた分を吸収するために設けておくものである。各ルータ内では、指定された配分遅延値内で処理が完了できるように、既存のスケジューリング方法による処理が行われる。

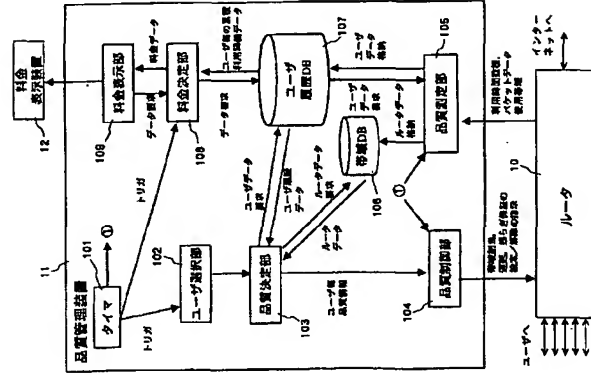
【0064】図7は、この遅延配分値決定方法の具体的な処理の一例を示すフローチャートである。

【0065】まず、 t が監視時点 t_j であるかを判断し（ステップ241）、監視時点がなければそのまま待ち、監視時点であれば、全コンポジションを判断済みかどうかを判断する（ステップ242）。判断済みであれば、次の監視時点まで待つために、ステップ241に移行する。判断済みでない場合には、未設定の1コンポジションを選択し（ステップ243）、経由する各ルータから情報を収集し（ステップ244）、上記の【数2】で表される $D(i, t_j)$ を計算する（ステップ245）。次に、 $i = 0$ とし（ステップ246）、 i を1だけインクリメントし（ステップ247）、 i が $n+1$ に達したかどうかを判断する（ステップ248）。 $n+1$ に達した場合、すなわち n 台のルータの全てに処理が終了している場合にはステップ241に戻り、 $n+1$ に達していない場合には、 $D(i, t_j) < D(i, t_{j-1})$ が成立するかを判断する（ステップ249）。 $D(i, t_j) < D(i, t_{j-1})$ が成立する場合は、前回の計算値より小さい値になった場合であるので、 $D(i, t_j)$ をルータ i に通知し（ステップ250）、ステップ247に戻る。一方、 $D(i, t_j) < D(i, t_{j-1})$ が成立しない場合には、そのままステップ247に戻る。

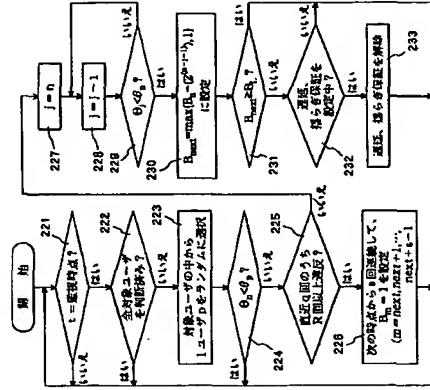
【0066】【発明の効果】以上説明したように本発明によれば、ユーザは直近での利用時間が長くなるほどより品質の良いサービスを受けられるということと、サービス提供側からみた場合には、常にユーザに対してある程度のサービス利用が見込めるようになるという効果がある。

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【図1】



【図6】



【図2】

